

Message Text

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42

ACTION ARA-10

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PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15 /046 W
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O 081540Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6484

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 0153

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CI, US

SUBJECT: REMARKS OF GENERAL LEIGH

1. AT AWARDS CEREMONY ON DEPARTURE OF AIR ATTACHE
LT. COL. LAWRENCE CORCORAN JANUARY 7, JUNTA MEMBER AND
AIR FORCE GENERAL GUSTAVO LEIGH MADE POINTED REFERENCE
TO WHAT HE CONSIDERS TO BE THE HIGHLY SATISFACTORY STATE
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN CHILE AND THE US.

2. JANUARY 8 SANTIAGO PRESS DIRECTLY QUOTES GENERAL LEIGH
AS FOLLOWS: "I WANT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY,
WHEN WE HAVE THE PLEASURE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE AMERICAN
AMBASSADOR, TO REAFFIRM PUBLICLY THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN
OUR AIR FORCES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY HONESTY,
SINCERITY, FRANKNESS, AND CORRECTNESS. REPEATED STATEMENTS
OF THE ENEMIES OF CHILE, TO THE EFFECT THAT THERE IS
INTERVENTION OR IMPROPER INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN
POLITICAL MATTERS IS ABSOLUTELY FALSE, FROM MY STANDPOINT.
THESE RELATIONS (BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES) HAVE NEVER
BEEN MORE HONEST, MORE OPEN AND SOUNDER IN THE PERIOD
OF THE LAST 10 TO 20 YEARS.

3. AT CONCLUSION OF CEREMONY LEIGH SAID HE WOULD LIKE
TO HAVE A CHAT WITH AMBASSADOR SOON, AND THE LATTER AGREED.

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4. COMMENT: LEIGH'S REMARKS MIGHT REPRESENT JUNTA'S RECOGNITION

THAT RECENT FAILURE OPENLY TO CULTIVATE CLOSE TOP-
LEVEL RELATIONSHIPS WITH EMBASSY MIGHT BE SELF DEFEATING.
GIVEN THE UNCOORDINATED CHARACTER OF THE JUNTA, HOWEVER,
IT IS MORE LIKELY THAT LEIGH WAS SPEAKING ONLY FOR HIM-
SELF. IF SO, QUESTION ARISES WHETHER LEIGH
WANTS TO GIVE US A SIGNAL RE HIS INCREASINGLY OPEN
DIFFERENCES WITH PINOCHET OVER VARIOUS ASPECTS OF GOC
POLICY. AMBASSADOR WILL FOLLOW UP AT APPROPRIATE
OPPORTUNITY.
POPPER

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